

Department of the Interior
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office
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News Release



<http://carlsbad.fws.gov>

(SC)

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Contact: Jane Hendron, Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office – 760/431-9440 ext. 205

For Release: April 13, 2006

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD REOPENED ON PROPOSAL TO
DESIGNATE CRITICAL HABITAT FOR
ENDANGERED SAN DIEGO COUNTY BUTTERFLY**

Public Hearings Scheduled in Carlsbad, California

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is reopening a public comment period and scheduling public hearings on its proposal to designate critical habitat for the federally endangered Laguna Mountains skipper butterfly (*Pyrgus ruralis lagunae*).

Public comments on proposed critical habitat will be accepted until 5:00 p.m. on May 15, 2006.

Public hearings on the proposed critical habitat rule are scheduled for April 27, 2006, at the Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office, 6010 Hidden Valley Road, Carlsbad, California. Hearings will be held from 1:00pm to 3:00pm and from 6:00 to 8:00 pm.

The Service published a proposed rule on December 13, 2005, to designate approximately 6,662 acres on portions of the Palomar and Laguna Mountains as critical habitat for the Laguna Mountains skipper. Copies of the proposed rule and other information about the Laguna Mountains skipper are available on the Internet at

http://www.fws.gov/carlsbad/LMS_Docs.htm.

Comments and information on the proposed designation of critical habitat should be submitted in writing to the Field Supervisor, Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office, 6010 Hidden Valley Road, Carlsbad, California 92011. Comments and materials may also be sent by facsimile to 760/431-9624. Electronic comments may be submitted to: FW8pchskipper@fws.gov.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge

System, which encompasses 545 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resources offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign and Native American tribal governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

For more information about the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, visit our home page at www.fws.gov.

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